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SUBJECT: Greece: 2009 TIP Report Submission - Part 1 of 4

REF: 08 STATE 132759

¶1. (U) This document is Sensitive But Unclassified.
Please protect accordingly.

¶2. (U) This is the first of four cables. After the
Summary, the cable text is keyed to REFTEL paragraphs 23
(THE COUNTRY'S TIP SITUATION) and 24 (SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE
GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-TIP EFFORTS).

SUMMARY

¶3. (SBU) The Government of Greece made significant domestic, regional, and international efforts to combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP) in 2008-09. Greek law enforcement statistics for 2008 show that the government arrested 162 traffickers (41 more than the previous year), investigated 40 trafficking cases (one fewer than the previous year), identified 78 victims of trafficking (22 fewer than the previous year), and provided protection and assistance to 36 victims (one more than the previous year). Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations (IOs), many of whom receive government funding and training support, reported providing assistance to at least 657 trafficking victims. The Anti-Trafficking Unit, part of the Organized Crime Division of the Hellenic Police, spearheaded multiple successful operations, tackling major human trafficking rings throughout the country.

Greece strengthened efforts to raise awareness about trafficking and demonstrated increased political will on tackling TIP. Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyiannis publicly stated that combating TIP was a priority, and the government partnered with UNICEF on a major public awareness campaign on the trafficking of children. The government resumed interministerial cooperation on TIP and formed a new working-level task force coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The MFA, the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) began work on a comprehensive trafficking database to enhance the government's collection and dissemination of law enforcement, judicial, and victim-related statistics.

The government continued to support numerous programs to prevent

trafficking and address the needs of TIP victims, funding public and private shelters, legal aid, counseling, and health services. In 2008, the Government of Greece reported funding at least 2,671,207 euro (3,740,000 USD) for anti-trafficking efforts, a 43 percent increase from the 1,869,100 euro reported for the previous year. Of the 2008 funding, 1,739,421 euro (2,435,000 USD) was provided by the MFA and Hellenic Aid, 486,786.20 euro (681,500 USD) was provided by the Secretariat for Gender Equality (Ministry of Interior), and the remaining 445,000 euro (623,000 USD) was provided by the Ministry of Health and Welfare. The Director of Hellenic Aid stated that anti-trafficking projects would continue to be a priority for 2009. (NOTE: Please protect all funding data. END NOTE.)

Despite numerous successes, problem areas still remain. Victim identification procedures, especially among front-line Border Police, Coast Guard, and "vice squad" officers, need to be strengthened. Greek courts, especially at the appeals level, need to reduce the number of suspended sentences given to traffickers and complicit officials and make sure jail time is served. Obtaining statistics on many TIP-related indicators continues to be challenging. The Greek Parliament ratified a Child Repatriation Agreement with Albania in July 2008; however, implementation of the agreement has been slow. Greece has signed but still has not ratified the Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Trafficking.

Based on the Greek government's clear progress on combating TIP but also its need for continued improvement, it is the Embassy's judgment that Greece should be assessed a Tier Two ranking. We look forward to harnessing the government's increased political will and momentum on tackling TIP for the 2009-2010 reporting

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period. END SUMMARY.

THE COUNTRY'S TIP SITUATION

1A. What is (are) the source(s) of available information on trafficking in persons? What plans are in place (if any) to undertake further documentation of human trafficking? How reliable are these sources?

Sources of information include:

-- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The MFA is the Embassy's primary government interlocutor on trafficking issues and coordinates a working-level interministerial task force to coordinate anti-trafficking activities. The MFA receives most of its anti-TIP information from other ministries.

-- Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the Hellenic Police, part of the Ministry of Interior (MOI), Department of Public Order. The MOJ provides legal statistics on trafficking crimes. The Hellenic Police collects information on anti-trafficking law enforcement activities. Much of this information is not available to the public but is usually shared with NGOs and international organizations.

-- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Anti-trafficking NGOs in Greece exist in all forms: large and small, domestic and international, victim-focused and policy-focused, and secular and faith-based. Most NGOs provide anti-trafficking information to the public.

-- International Organizations / Entities. International organizations such as IOM, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF, and the Council of Europe regularly monitor human trafficking in Greece. Their periodic reports are available to the public.

-- Source-Country Diplomats. Diplomatic representatives of source countries for sex and labor trafficking informally provided information on trafficking flows and victim conditions.

This information was not publicly available.

-- Migrant-Community Organizations. Representatives of immigrant communities, such as the Pakistani and Nigerian communities often had information on smuggling and trafficking activities affecting them.

A lack of easily-accessible, reliable statistics on some trafficking-related metrics continues to be a problem. For example, court-case data is still largely kept in paper files, limiting the ability of the MOJ and the courts to compile and publish statistics on trafficking cases. To address this issue, in 2008, the MFA and the MOJ, in coordination with IOM, began work on a comprehensive trafficking database to enhance the government's collection and dissemination of law enforcement, judicial, and victim-related statistics. The MFA will own and operate the database, the police and the MOJ will provide law enforcement (arrests and investigations) and judicial (convictions and sentences) statistics on trafficking crimes, and IOM will work with NGOs and government-run shelters to provide victim support data.

-- B. Is the country a country of origin, transit, and/or destination for internationally trafficked men, women, or children? Does trafficking occur within the country's borders? If so, does internal trafficking occur in territory outside of the government's control (e.g. in a civil war situation)? To where are people trafficked? For what purposes are they trafficked? Provide, where possible, numbers or estimates for each group of trafficking victims. Have there been any changes in the TIP situation since the last TIP Report (e.g. changes in destinations)?

Greece is a destination and transit country for internationally

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trafficked women and children, and to a lesser extent, men. The government and NGOs report that female sex trafficking victims originate primarily from Eastern Europe and the Balkans (Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, Lithuania, Latvia) as well as Africa (Nigeria). ACT UP, an NGO, reported that there are scores of male sex trafficking victims from Afghanistan and sub-Saharan Africa working as prostitutes in Greece, many in their teens and suffering from sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs). Anecdotal evidence from NGOs suggests that sex trafficking may have decreased since the previous year.

Labor trafficking victims are primarily children and men, originating from Albania, Romania, Moldova, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. (NGOs report that labor trafficking is more closely tied to migrant smuggling networks.) The Anti-Trafficking Unit of the Hellenic Police reported that there may be hundreds of victims of labor trafficking in Greece. In 2008, NGOs reported assisting at least 657 TIP victims. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that labor exploitation in northern Greece has increased, and Anti-TIP Police have stated that they plan to focus on labor trafficking for 2009. However, official statistics or reliable estimates on the extent or magnitude of human trafficking are unavailable.

Greece is also a transit country for TIP, with victims being moved on to Italy and other EU countries. There are no indications that Greece is being used as a TIP transit country for the United States.

Several NGOs reported anecdotal evidence that Roma women and children are trafficked within Greece for sex and labor exploitation. The makeup of source countries for trafficking in Greece did not change from 2007 to 2008.

The Anti-Trafficking Police reported that there were no Greek citizens who were victims of trafficking in 2008.

In January 2005, Grigoris Lazos, a sociologist and criminologist at Panteion University, estimated that there were between 6,100 and 6,250 victims of sex trafficking (women and teenage girls) in Greece. Lazos, a 2005 Index on Censorship Whistleblower Award winner for his "tireless campaign against human trafficking," had

earlier estimated, in 2003, that there were 20,000 TIP victims in Greece. He has attributed the decrease in his estimate to lower demand for prostitution, linked to the lower discretionary income of Greeks. (NOTE: We are unaware of recent studies linking lower incomes to a decrease in demand for prostitution in Greece. END NOTE.) Anecdotal evidence from NGOs and the Anti-Trafficking Police indicates that trafficking rates continue to decline, but other NGOs report an increase in sex trafficking from Romania and Bulgaria.

Anti-child trafficking NGOs estimated in 2008, as in 2007, that "hundreds" of children, mainly Roma from Albania, remain victims of trafficking for labor exploitation. These children are typically forced sell small items (packs of tissue or flowers), beg, or steal. NGOs report that the trafficking of children by third parties continues to decrease, due to police enforcement actions in Greece. However, NGOs and the police also report an increase in "family-based" trafficking, where Albanian Roma parents bring their own children into Greece and force them to work.

The government ratified the bilateral Child Repatriation Agreement with Albania in July 2008 and the protocol came into force of law in August 2008 (law 3692/2008). The law provides for coordinated prosecution, trafficking prevention, victim identification, and repatriation between the two countries, with NGO involvement. However, the agreement has not yet been implemented in a systematic way. (Preexisting cooperation between Albanian and Greek NGOs and law enforcement continues in an ad hoc manner.)

-- C. What kind of conditions are the victims trafficked into?

Female victims are trafficked primarily for prostitution, working in bars, brothels, strip clubs, and on the streets. NGOs and the police report that conditions for these victims vary greatly, with some victims subject to physical violence and others induced into prostitution by psychological or emotional deception. Traffickers,

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brothel owners, and pimps often confiscate the identity documents of victims and subject them to a variety of threats. Victims are forced to "work off" debts owed to traffickers.

NGOs and the Anti-Trafficking police reported that sex trafficking victims suffered less outright physical abuse, with traffickers using emotional and financial deception to induce victims into sex work. Victims in this situation had some freedom of movement, communication with relatives, and small amounts of spending money, but suffered increased psychological and emotional abuse. NGOs reported that these victims sometimes remained in contact with and emotionally dependent on their traffickers even after entering a shelter or entering police protective custody. Permitted to keep part of their earnings, some victims appeared to be unlicensed prostitutes rather than trafficked women. However, victims were subject to threats of physical violence, deportation, or loss of life if they went to the authorities.

NGOs reported that some African (particularly Nigerian) women trafficked to Greece for sexual exploitation were led to believe they were under spiritual or magical bondage, and were thus more fearful and less likely to go to the police and/or NGOs for assistance. Some victims were forced to marry their traffickers or traffickers' associates to "legalize" their status in Greece. Some victims, mostly African women, were forced by traffickers to file for asylum in order to legalize their status in Greece.

While traffickers sometimes arranged for basic health and STD checkups for their sex workers, victims of sex trafficking typically lacked adequate health care.

Male victims came mostly from Albania, Bulgaria, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India, and were forced to work in farms in debt bondage. Typically, victims' travel documents were confiscated or destroyed, and they were paid little or no wages, often under threat of violence. As in 2007, there were reports of human smugglers locking labor trafficking victims in apartments once they arrived in Greece, and demanding a "ransom" from family members in origin

countries.

Child TIP victims were mainly Roma from Albania, though there were increasing numbers of Bulgarian and Romanian children. Subject to labor exploitation, they typically sold small items (packs of tissues or flowers), or engaged in begging or stealing. The Anti-Trafficking Police reported that this type of child trafficking was carried out less by third-party traffickers and more by the children's parents, who forced their children to work on the streets. These child victims often lived in poverty and lacked basic education, shelter, and medical services.

-- D. Vulnerability to TIP: Are certain groups of persons more at risk of being trafficked (e.g. women and children, boys versus girls, certain ethnic groups, refugees, IDPs, etc.)?

NGOs and the Anti-Trafficking Police reported that the following groups of persons were at particular risk of being trafficked:

SEX TRAFFICKING:

-- Poor women from Eastern Europe (in particular, Romania and Albania) were especially susceptible to being induced into prostitution by emotional entrapment and deception;
-- Women from Africa (especially Nigeria) were particularly vulnerable to spiritual and magic or voodoo-based coercion;
-- Boys and male teenagers from Afghanistan were at particular risk of contracting STDs as sex workers.

LABOR TRAFFICKING:

-- Refugees and asylum seekers from Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan were susceptible to being exploited for labor by their smugglers / traffickers;
-- Roma children, particularly from Albania, were at high risk of being trafficked for labor exploitation by their families.

-- E. Traffickers and Their Methods: Who are the traffickers/exploiters? Are they independent business people? Small or family-based crime groups? Large international organized

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crime syndicates? What methods are used to approach victims? For example, are they offered lucrative jobs, sold by their families, or approached by friends of friends? What methods are used to move the victims (e.g., are false documents being used?). Are employment, travel, and tourism agencies or marriage brokers involved with or fronting for traffickers or crime groups to traffic individuals?

Arrest statistics and analyses by the Anti-Trafficking Police indicate that Greek, Eastern European, and Nigerian criminals are the primary traffickers for sexual exploitation. Police estimate that there are fewer than 100 sex and labor trafficking organizations based in Greece. The vast majority are small, cell-based organizations that operate without a Mafia-style hierarchy. Instead, trafficking rings are flexible and are known to cooperate with each other on a short-term basis. Trafficking networks are often linked to bars, clubs, and hotels. Travel and employment agencies are known to facilitate travel and legal documentation for traffickers. Police have discovered a variety of money-laundering fronts for trafficking rings: restaurants, nightclubs, and even a chain of bakeries.

Police reported a trend that Greeks were running fewer trafficking networks over time. Instead, traffickers were organized increasingly along ethnic lines:

-- RUSSIAN: Larger criminal groups with recruiting networks throughout the former Soviet Union; often collaborated closely with Greek criminal organizations. More likely to be linked to international crime syndicates.

-- ALBANIAN / ROMANIAN / BULGARIAN: Smaller, more ethnically homogeneous cells. These sex traffickers increasingly used emotional and relational deception to lure women into sex work. Some traffickers are women, who also act as pimps.

-- NIGERIAN: Small, ethnically homogenous cells where traffickers

often intermarried with their victims to provide the victims with legal status. Some traffickers are women, who also act as pimps.

-- LABOR TRAFFICKERS: Typically operated separately from sex trafficking organizations; linked closely (and sometimes operating simultaneously) as "normal" smugglers. Tied to smuggling networks in Turkey, who facilitated travel from the Middle East and South Asia to Greece.

Victims of sex trafficking are approached by members of trafficking networks or "friends" of the networks. Men or women with knowledge of both Greek and the language of the country of the victim's origin typically offer to "assist" the victim in finding a job in Greece as waitresses, nurses, or household workers, but upon their arrival in Greece are forced into prostitution. If the victims resist, they may be physically and verbally threatened, raped, or isolated until they give in. NGOs and police report that victims are rarely physically abused because traffickers see them as commodities which have to be in good physical shape in order to attract customers. Traffickers use debt bondage to coerce victims into sex work, telling them that they owe the traffickers large sums of money and must work for them. Usually, traffickers organize travel groups of 2-8 women who travel by bus, train and air on legal passports and visas.

The newer trend of emotional coercion reported by NGOs and the police involves a trafficker (or a friend of a trafficker) using deception to enter into a romantic relationship with a victim - typically from poorer areas in countries such as Albania or Romania.

The trafficker then arranges for his "girlfriend" to travel to Greece to live with him, but upon arrival uses fraud (typically claims that he is in financial difficulty) to induce the victim into sex work. This type of trafficking involves fewer but more emotionally dependent victims, many of whom are unaware that they have been trafficked and will avoid seeking help from the police or NGOs. The police attribute the recent increase in this type of trafficking to two factors: 1) Physical abuse of victims is solid evidence in court, leading to tougher prison sentences for traffickers; emotional abuse and coercion is harder to prosecute, and 2) victims under emotional entrapment are less likely to seek

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police or NGO help.

Sex trafficking victims typically enter Greece using legitimate visas and valid passports. Traffickers typically trick Greek consular officials into issuing tourist visas to their victims, or in rarer cases, bribe officials to issue visas. Travel and employment agencies in Russia, Eastern Europe, and Greece are known to arrange fraudulent itineraries, job offers, and hotel reservations to facilitate travel. In addition, such agencies are known to be fronts, especially in the former Soviet Union, for traffickers' recruitment efforts.

Bulgaria and Romania joined the European Union on January 1, 2007. Citizens of both countries enjoy freedom of movement into Greece. Thus, victims from the two countries are easily trafficked into Greece without a need for additional documentation.

Traffickers for labor exploitation are often linked to smuggling organizations, who arrange for the transportation of victims from their source country into Greece. Labor trafficking victims typically enter Greece without legal documentation, crossing the Albania-Greece or Turkey-Greece land borders or making the journey across the Aegean Sea. Travel is in larger groups and may involve a variety of "middlemen" of different nationalities. While most undocumented migrants are smuggled into Greece and then "set loose" by their smugglers, labor trafficking victims are received by local criminals / labor brokers who arrange for forced agricultural labor. Oftentimes, fraudulent employment agencies in source countries are the initial point of recruitment for victims of labor trafficking.

Roma children victims of trafficking are brought into Greece without documentation or with fraudulent family documents or birth certificates. Destitute parents are known to "rent" or sell their children into forced labor. In the case of parents accompanying and

exploiting their own children for labor, children may travel with their parents using legitimate documentation.

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SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-TIP
EFFORTS
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-- A. Does the government acknowledge that trafficking is a problem in the country? If not, why not?

The government publicly acknowledges that trafficking is a problem in Greece.

-- B. Which government agencies are involved in anti- trafficking efforts and which agency, if any, has the lead?

There are eight national ministries with official responsibility for anti-trafficking efforts. The Interministerial Committee on Trafficking in Persons is comprised of nine Secretaries General (SG) from those ministries. In 2008, the MFA SG became the chair of the Committee and created a new working-level interministerial task force to work more effectively on TIP issues.

The responsibilities of each ministry:

-- MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA): The MFA oversees the new working-level interministerial task force, negotiates bilateral and multilateral agreements such as the Child Repatriation Agreement with Albania, and coordinates the government's yearly report on its anti-trafficking efforts. Hellenic Aid, the development arm of the MFA, funds NGO and IO initiatives such as shelters, anti-TIP training, victim services, and trafficking source country development projects. Hellenic Aid cooperates with USAID in funding the Transnational Action against Child Trafficking (TACT) program in Albania. The MFA Secretary General assigned to oversee anti-TIP activities is a senior Ambassador with a rank similar to that of an Under Secretary of State.

-- MINISTRY OF JUSTICE (MOJ): The MOJ supports and provides coordination and anti-TIP training for Greece's prosecutors and judges. The MOJ collects prosecution, conviction, and sentencing

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data on TIP crimes. Under Greek law, prosecutors have the legal authority to recognize an individual as an official victim of trafficking.

-- MINISTRY OF INTERIOR (MOI): The MOI is responsible for implementing Greece's migration policy, including the issuance of residency permits for recognized victims of trafficking. The Department of Public Order oversees the Hellenic Police and its Anti-Trafficking Unit, which has primary responsibility for anti-TIP law enforcement and investigative activity. Anti-Trafficking Unit officers receive specialized training from the government and NGOs (as well as the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) to conduct anti-TIP operations, support other police units on TIP issues, and protect victims. The Anti-Trafficking Unit also exchanges intelligence and other information with prosecutors, NGOs, and health authorities. In 2008, the Unit had 39 police officers, expected to grow to 45 in 2009.

-- MINISTRY OF HEALTH (MOH): The MOH is responsible for the medical care of trafficking victims, running shelters, operating a telephone hotline for TIP victims, coordinating victim repatriation with IOM, and emergency services. EKKA, a network of two shelters for TIP victims, is operated by the MOH.

-- MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT: These two ministries are responsible for education, vocational training, counseling, and social support for victims. (NOTE: NGOs report that these ministries are not particularly involved in anti-trafficking activities in practice.)

-- MINISTRY OF FINANCE (MOF): The MOF oversees financial policy for Greece and sets government-wide regulations on the disbursement of

Greek funds, including grant funding to NGOs and other ministries. This directly affects NGOs and IOs, many of whom depend on government funding. In early 2009, the MOF and the MFA agreed to remove a bank guarantee requirement for all Hellenic Aid TIP-related grants - a relatively new restriction that would have prevented most small anti-TIP NGOs from receiving grant funds.

-- C. What are the limitations on the government's ability to address this problem in practice? For example, is funding for police or other institutions inadequate? Is overall corruption a problem? Does the government lack the resources to aid victims?

Despite numerous successes, the government still has multiple limitations on its ability to address trafficking effectively. Victim identification procedures, especially among front-line Border Police, Coast Guard, and "vice squad" officers (part of the Prostitution and Gambling Division), need to be strengthened. Greek courts, especially at the appeals level, need to reduce the number of suspended sentences given to traffickers and complicit officials and make sure jail time is served. (NOTE: This problem is not unique to trafficking offenses; enforcement of sentencing is a problem in many other areas of criminal justice as well. END NOTE.)

Obtaining statistics on many TIP-related indicators continues to be challenging. The Greek Parliament ratified a Child Repatriation Agreement with Albania in July 2008; however, implementation of the agreement has been slow. Greece has signed but still has not ratified the Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Trafficking. NGOs complained that grant disbursement delays and new grant reporting requirements have created financial difficulty for anti-TIP organizations.

VICTIM IDENTIFICATION:

NGOs universally reported that victim identification was the government's greatest limitation in combating trafficking in persons. In 2008, Human Rights Watch, the UNHCR, multiple domestic NGOs, and the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights all criticized Greece for failing to ensure that proper victim identification procedures were used by the front-line Border Police, Coast Guard, and "vice squad." While the specialized Anti-Trafficking Police did a good job with victim identification and support, NGOs stated that trafficking victims were far more likely to be first encountered by a Border Police or Coast Guard officer detaining illegal migrants or a "vice squad" officer

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patrolling a red-light district. Thus, proper training and implementation of victim identification techniques is crucial for these front-line government workers.

Doctors and nurses in Greek hospitals, some of whom provide free care and STD checkups to sex workers, lack training and the means of how to identify and report confidentially trafficking victims. Proper training and creating guidelines on confidentiality is important, however, because if traffickers realize that health care workers report potential victims, sex workers and trafficking victims may be "driven underground" and denied health care by their handlers.

In 2008, the government made multiple efforts to address this problem. The Anti-TIP Police provides regular training to "vice squad" officers on victim identification, and the MOJ and MFA, in coordination with IOM, have provided anti-trafficking training to Coast Guard officers. The Anti-TIP Police distributed interactive training guides on the government's "Ilaeira" anti-TIP initiative to all polic commanders in the country.

SENTENCING TRAFFICKERS:

Greek courts, especially at the appeals level, need to reduce the number of suspended sentences given to traffickers and complicit officials and make sure jail time is served. Sentencing data from the MOJ reveals that first instance courts, when they convict traffickers, give relatively tough sentences. The Greek legal system allows defendants to appeal up to two times, to the appeals level and then to the Supreme Court. In 2008, there were multiple

examples of appeals courts giving more lenient treatment to traffickers than first instance courts. In previous years, complicit officials and police officers have been given suspended sentences in lieu of jail time. In addition, some NGOs have accused Greek prosecutors and judges of prosecuting foreign defendants more aggressively than Greek traffickers. (NOTE: Part of the problem is structural, as prosecutors and courts in Greece are very independent and wary of interference from the Ministry of Justice. Another problem is a generally inefficient judicial system, which allows cases to drag on for years - sometimes with dangerous suspected traffickers set free on bail in the interim. Greek courts use a largely paper-based system to track cases, adding to judicial inefficiency. Enforcement of sentencing is a problem in many other areas of criminal justice as well. Thus, ensuring coordinated action against traffickers is a challenge for the Greek government. END NOTE.)

To address this issue, the MFA and MOJ, in cooperation with IOM, organized multiple anti-trafficking training conferences for prosecutors in 2007 and 2008. These events focused on awareness building, legal techniques, and victim identification. The IOM plans to expand this program to judges in 2009.

TIP STATISTICS:

Many TIP-related statistics, such as countrywide TIP victim estimates, are unavailable or very hard to obtain. As the government only recently revived regular meetings of the Interministerial Committee on Trafficking in Persons, coordination of data between government agencies is limited. The Ministry of Justice, which maintains case files for prosecutors and the court system, lacks modern databases and must compile many trafficking statistics by hand, from paper files.

Recognizing this limitation, the MFA, MOJ, and IOM began joint work on a comprehensive trafficking database to enhance the government's collection and dissemination of law enforcement, judicial, and victim-related statistics. The MFA will own and operate the database, the police and the MOJ will provide law enforcement (arrests and investigations) and judicial (convictions and sentences) statistics on trafficking crimes, and IOM will work with NGOs and government-run shelters to provide victim support and identification data. The MFA expects an initial version of the database to be in operation by the end of 2009.

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS:

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NGOs and international organizations universally praised Greece's anti-trafficking laws as robust and in line with international standards. (Proper implementation of the law, all agreed, was the challenge.)

At the end of the reporting period, however, Greece had not yet moved forward on two important legal agreements. The Greek Parliament ratified a Child Repatriation Agreement with Albania in July 2008; however, implementation of the agreement has been slow. Additionally, Greece has signed but still has not ratified the Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Trafficking.

FUNDING:

Overall, the government does not lack the resources to aid TIP victims and combat human trafficking. The government continued making funds available for training of police personnel and for key civil servants, including judges, prosecutors, psychologists, social workers, and the personnel responsible for issuing residence permits. In addition, the government provided grant funding for a wide variety of NGO projects to combat TIP. This funding came from multiple government ministries: The MFA, MOJ, MOI, and the MOH, among others.

The commander of the Anti-Trafficking Police reported that he had excellent funding support from Hellenic Police headquarters and that he expected his unit to grow from 39 to 45 officers in 2009.

Despite the availability of government funding, over the last three years, many anti-trafficking NGOs throughout the country have reported delays with and increasingly limited access to grant funding from Hellenic Aid, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Employment. Grant disbursement delays forced two TIP shelters (KLIMAKA and ENOW) to shut down in 2008. In addition, a new regulation from the Ministry of Finance (MOF) requiring bank guarantees for NGOs and an older regulation reducing the government's contribution to 50 percent of a project's funding adversely affected smaller NGOs, many of which do not have sufficient resources to find funding elsewhere.

In response to Embassy engagement, the MFA and the MOF announced in early 2009 that they would remove the bank guarantee requirement for Hellenic Aid grants to anti-Trafficking NGOs - an important step in restoring funding to these organizations. In addition, Hellenic Aid made domestic, regional, and international trafficking projects a key priority for its 2008 grant cycle, approving anti-TIP grants worth 1,399,421 euro (1,960,000 USD). 515,738 euro (722,000 USD, or 37 percent) was designated for NGOs, while 883,683 euro (1,238,000 USD, or 63 percent) was earmarked for government-run anti-trafficking projects. The Director of Hellenic Aid stated that anti-trafficking projects would continue to be a priority for 2009.

(NOTE: Despite Hellenic Aid's continued support of TIP-related NGOs and programs, it is not clear if this funding will be sustainable over the long term. As Greece continues to modernize and follow international best practices for NGO funding, the government needs to put in place a system that will help make funding for TIP NGOs sustainable. END NOTE.)

-- D. To what extent does the government systematically monitor its anti-trafficking efforts (on all fronts -- prosecution, victim protection, and prevention) and periodically make available, publicly or privately and directly or through regional/international organizations, its assessments of these anti-trafficking efforts?

The government does an adequate job of monitoring its own anti-trafficking efforts, but there are inconsistencies from ministry to ministry.

-- POLICE: The Anti-Trafficking Police (under the Department of Public Order, in the Ministry of Interior) have dedicated experts who analyze and report on anti-trafficking law enforcement operations. Major operations are publicized and the police cooperate closely with international organizations (such as IOM) and

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NGOs to provide law enforcement assessments. The police, in coordination with IOM and other NGOs, also publish and distribute interactive anti-trafficking training manuals and case studies to law enforcement officers throughout Greece.

-- MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS: The MFA coordinates a working-level interministerial task force which oversees the Greek government's efforts to combat TIP. Every year, the MFA provides the Embassy and select IOs and NGOs with a comprehensive, detailed assessment of the government's anti-TIP efforts. This assessment covers all fronts - law enforcement and prosecution efforts, victim protection, public awareness efforts, and NGO activities. However, this report is not made public. (COMMENT: In many countries, the police, Ministry of Health, or the Ministry of Justice would be the proper lead agency on anti-TIP coordination. In Greece, however, the MFA has a lead role, which officials explain is due to the fact that TIP victims are almost universally non-Greek foreigners. Additionally, USG pressure on Greece, via the annual TIP Report, is seen as a "foreign relations" issue for the MFA to handle. END COMMENT.)

-- MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, COURT SYSTEM: The Ministry of Justice, prosecutors, and judges keep statistics and files on anti-trafficking cases but do not systematically analyze trafficking trends. Their data is passed on to the MFA for analysis and assessment there.

-- MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND WELFARE: The Ministry of Health produces trafficking assessments through its government-run shelters on an ad hoc basis. This information is provided to NGOs and other ministries.

The absence of reliable statistics on certain trafficking-related metrics continues to be a barrier to assessing anti-trafficking efforts.

14. (U) Greece 2009 TIP Report Submission continued SEPTEL.

SPECKHARD